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INTERIM REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN TAJIKISTAN

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1206 (1998) of 12 November 1998. It brings up to date the record of developments in Tajikistan and the activities of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) since my last report of 3 November 1998 (S/1998/1029).

II. MAIN DEVELOPMENTS

2. The implementation of the General Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan saw further slow progress in the period under review. At the time of my last report, the Tajik Parliament was preparing to convene its regular session. On 13 November, it adopted the law on political parties and approved the cabinet appointments of the representatives of the United Tajik Opposition (UTO), which had been rejected at the previous session (see S/1998/754, paras. 1-6). The Parliament also ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, as well as the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights along with the Optional Protocol.

3. In November 1998, President Emomali Rakhmonov established a joint working group to verify the state of completion of the first two stages of the protocol on military issues. The group presented its findings to the plenary Commission on National Reconciliation (CNR) and, based on that report, on 23 November, Abdullo Nuri, UTO leader and CNR Chairman, formally announced to CNR that the first two stages of the protocol could not be considered completed. The main issues were, as previously reported (S/1998/374, para. 6), that many UTO fighters do not stay in the assembly areas and only a limited number of weapons were registered and stored. This problem has still not been resolved.

4. On 25 December 1998, Mr. Nuri formally declared the return of all UTO fighters to Tajikistan and the closing of all its bases outside the country. He further pledged, on 28 December, that the UTO would disband its military forces in early 1999, in accordance with the General Agreement, to pave the way for the lifting of the ban on UTO political parties. According to the military

protocol, armed units that do not cooperate with its provisions will be considered illegal and subject to forcible disarmament.

5. On 5 January 1999, CNR issued a formal resolution which recognized that UTO had not fully complied with the provisions of the military protocol and called for all UTO fighters to return to their assembly areas and place their weapons in the designated storage areas. The resolution also called for stricter control over the carrying of weapons by UTO fighters outside the assembly areas. That resolution was preceded by a serious incident, on 30 December, in which two opposition groups engaged in a firefight outside the CNR building in Dushanbe, killing five persons and injuring six. Mr. Nuri has condemned the action of the two groups. At the same time, he has expressed concern over the slow pace of integration of the UTO fighters into the power structure, which contributed to the problem of discipline in the UTO ranks.

6. The Joint Central Review Commission, set up under stage III of the protocol, continued its work; it has so far reviewed 225 fighters in Gorno-Badakshan and 1,084 fighters in Kofarnikhon, Leninsky and Dushanbe, in addition to personnel of various government power structures.

7. In the allocation of government posts to UTO, in accordance with the 30 per cent quota, some progress was made. On 28 November, President Rakhmonov agreed to allocate an additional six posts to UTO, at the level of deputy minister. On 27 January, UTO presented the list of UTO nominees to these posts to the Government. No agreement was reached on the appointment of the Minister of Defence.

8. Full implementation of the amnesty law, adopted in August 1997, is still pending.

9. In public statements at the beginning of the new year, President Rakhmonov declared his Government's intention to hold a referendum on amendments to the constitution, as well as parliamentary and presidential elections in 1999, and called on the international community to provide financial assistance in this regard. Mr. Nuri has publicly expressed his support. (President Rakhmonov's five-year term ends in November 1999; the term of the current Parliament expires in February 2000.)

10. Under the General Agreement, primary responsibility for assisting in the holding of elections is given to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and to the United Nations. OSCE and UNMOT are in close touch on the matter and are discussing with the Government the role that international organizations might play. In order to adhere to their stated intentions to carry out a referendum and elections this year, the parties would need to reach early agreement on issues related to constitutional reform. CNR has not made progress in its debate and has agreed to set aside, for the time being, the most contentious issue, which is the retention of the provision in the constitution that describes the character of the State as "secular".

11. The November session of Parliament was held against a backdrop of heightened tension in the country. On 3 November 1998, a force led by Mahmud Khudoiberdiev launched an offensive in Leninabad Province, the largest

and most prosperous region of the country. (Mr. Khudoiberdiev is a former army colonel who has been mentioned in previous reports in connection with anti-Government activities in the Khatlon Province, from which he was ousted in August 1997.) His force took control of Khujand, the main city and provincial capital, including the airport, and the mountain pass in the south linking the province with the rest of the country. A number of demands were made, including a share in the Government.

12. This use of force was strongly condemned in statements by CNR, UTO and the Contact Group of guarantor States and international organizations. In my own statement on 5 November 1998, I expressed firm opposition to this action and called on those concerned to pursue their aims by peaceful means so that the peace process in Tajikistan can be safeguarded. The Security Council was kept informed of these events and the President of the Council, in a statement to the press, expressed the Council's concern at the fighting and reaffirmed its commitment to the Tajik peace agreements.

13. On 6 November 1998, the Government began a counter-offensive, in which UTO joined. By 10 November, the Government had retaken control of the Province. Mr. Khudoiberdiev's whereabouts is unknown; it is believed that he has left the country. According to the Government, casualties amounted to 110 killed, almost half of them civilians, and 600 wounded.

14. It is widely believed that the force entered Leninabad Province from Uzbekistan, and this has affected relations between the two countries. On 12 November 1998, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Tajikistan issued a statement accusing the Uzbek authorities in having assisted Mr. Khudoiberdiev in preparing for the attack. The Tajik Parliament, at its session on 13 November, appealed to international organizations to take measures "to prevent future possibilities of aggression and interference by Uzbekistan in Tajikistan". On 13 November, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uzbekistan issued a statement firmly denying any involvement. Uzbekistan has recalled its Chargé d'affaires from Dushanbe on grounds of security, and its participation in the Contact Group has been suspended. Since then, however, both Governments have undertaken steps to improve their relations.

Security

15. The security situation in Tajikistan continued to be precarious. There was a noticeable increase in crime, in particular crime related to drug trafficking, and numerous violent incidents with possible political background. On 17 December 1998, a vehicle belonging to a foreign non-governmental organization came under fire from armed soldiers in Leninabad Province. One passenger was seriously wounded. In addition to the firefight in front of the CNR building on 30 December, there were a number of incidents involving opposition groups. On 5 January 1999, four farm workers were killed in the Darvaz region of Gorno-Badakshan in a raid by opposition commanders. On 30 January, eight opposition fighters were arrested by government servicemen at a checkpoint in the Faizabad district. The next day, according to the Government, about 300 opposition fighters took over the office of the Ministry of Interior in Faizabad, severely beat up its personnel, stole several weapons and freed the eight people who had

been arrested. A joint commission set up by the Government and UTO is investigating this incident.

16. Despite numerous démarches by UNMOT with the authorities and with UTO, no progress was made in the investigation into the killing of the four UNMOT personnel on 20 July 1998. The three suspects have not yet been brought to trial, awaiting material evidence to be turned over by UTO. UNMOT continues to observe strict security precautions, including a night-time curfew, and works only in Dushanbe.

United Nations activities

17. UNMOT continued to work closely with CNR to press forward on matters related to the implementation of the military protocol and constitutional reform. It also maintained contact with political groups outside CNR. UNMOT continued to coordinate the work of the Contact Group of guarantor States and international organizations in its efforts to facilitate the implementation of the General Agreement. In early January, the Contact Group undertook a review of the peace process and issued, on 13 January, a statement in which it urged the parties to take expeditious action to implement the remaining important tasks. The Contact Group recently revisited the idea of holding a meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers (see S/1998/754, para. 17 and S/1998/1029, para. 8).

18. UNMOT maintained contact with the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and remained in touch with the Russian border forces on matters of mutual concern.

19. The World Food Programme expressed its willingness to support projects related to the demobilization of UTO fighters, in the context of the implementation of the General Agreement. As a first step, it has agreed to provide two months supply of food to those fighters and to work towards a programme in the framework of its ongoing "food for work" programme.

20. The return of refugees from neighbouring countries continued with the assistance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). By the end of January, approximately 3,000 refugees had been repatriated from Turkmenistan and 1,140 from the Kyrgyz Republic. The United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Children's Fund, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and several non-governmental organizations assisted in the reintegration of returnees in their communities and intensified their efforts in the field of rehabilitation of rural schools, health clinics, water supply systems, irrigation schemes and other essential infrastructures, as well as the supply of educational materials, essential medical supplies and chemicals for water purification. A consolidated appeal for Tajikistan was launched in Geneva on 16 December 1998, for a total of $24.8 million for 1999, to address expected humanitarian and rehabilitation needs.

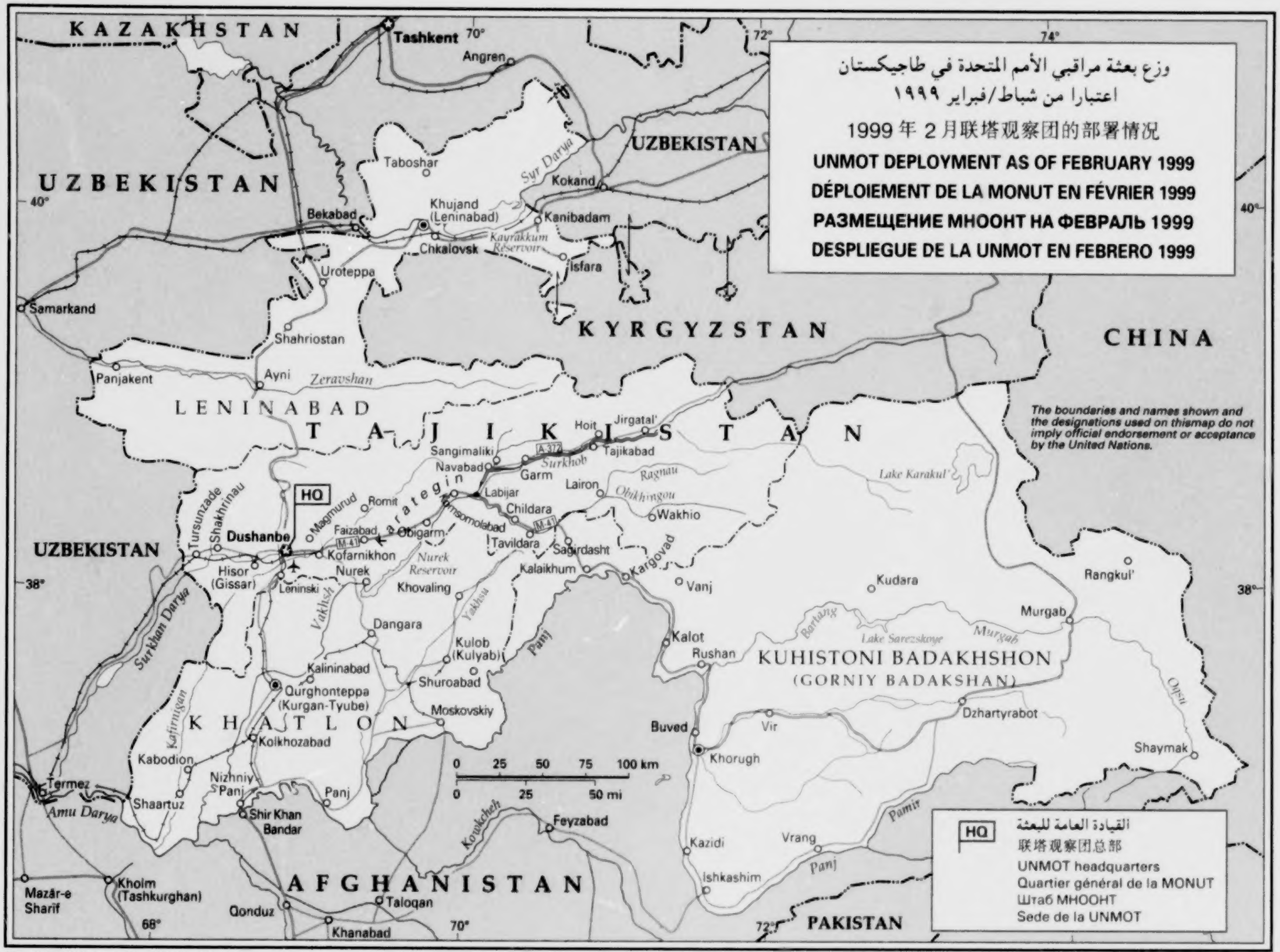
21. The United Nations International Drug Control Programme has decided to allocate, in 1999, $8 million for the reinforcement of the so-called anti-drug safety zone around Afghanistan.

III. OBSERVATIONS

22. There has been further slow progress in the peace process and a great deal remains yet to be done. The first two stages foreseen in the protocol on military issues have still not been completed and the extended debate of constitutional issues in CNR is ongoing. At the present stage, the holding of the constitutional referendum, as well as presidential and parliamentary elections, all to be held in 1999, remain uncertain. The risk inherent in the slow pace is the growing restlessness among the groups that are not direct parties to the peace agreement and to its power-sharing arrangements, as well as among the UTO fighters, who are awaiting reintegration into the Tajik army or demobilization. It is necessary to speed up the implementation of the process. Mr. Ján Kubiš, my Special Representative, and the members of the Contact Group are working with the parties to this end.

23. The transition period of 12 to 18 months foreseen in the peace agreement elapsed at the end of 1998, as has been acknowledged by the Tajik parties as well as by the Contact Group. The latter has again begun to consider the holding of a meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers. Such a meeting in support of the peace process could indeed be useful, if properly prepared.

24. I remain concerned by the precarious security situation in Tajikistan and with the fact that UTO has not contributed more effectively to the investigation of the killing of four members of UNMOT in July 1998. In the prevailing circumstances, UNMOT has continued to limit its activities to Dushanbe and to observe strict security precautions. I shall continue to keep the Security Council informed of any significant developments.



وزع بعثة مراقبي الأمم المتحدة في طاجيكستان
اعتبارا من شباط/فبراير ١٩٩٩

1999 年 2 月联塔观察团的部署情况

UNMOT DEPLOYMENT AS OF FEBRUARY 1999

DÉPLOIEMENT DE LA MONUT EN FÉVRIER 1999

РАЗМЕЩЕНИЕ МНООНТ НА ФЕВРАЛЬ 1999

DESPLIEGUE DE LA UNMOT EN FEBRERO 1999

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